



# SOUTH ASIAN NEWS

Center for South Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii, Manoa  
www.hawaii.edu/csas

Spring 2009

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Faculty / Student Updates
- 8 Preview of 2009 CSAS Spring Symposium
- 10 2008 J. Watumull Scholarship Reports
- 13 RCUH Grant Funds Undergraduate Honors Research in Nepal
- 14 Gandhi Photos Digitization Project
- 14 "Got Bollywood?" Or Looking for Something Else?
- 15 2008/2009 CSAS Colloquium Series

### *Letter From the Director / S. Shankar*

In the 2008-2009 academic year, the Center for South Asian Studies welcomes to UHM a number of faculty whose expertise is in South Asia—Sai Bhatawadekar in Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures, Kristin Bloomer in Religion, Priyam Das in Urban and Regional Planning, Reece Jones in Geography, Uzma Aslam Khan in English, and Paul Lavy in Art and Art History. The addition of these fine scholars is a sign of UHM's commitment to South Asian Studies. Especially heartening is the variety of disciplines they represent. Combined with faculty already here, they form a community of South Asia experts now approaching critical mass for further growth. The potential to develop South Asian Studies into a major area of expertise at UHM now exists. Despite the financial crisis affecting UHM, and

continued on page 2

### *Six New South Asian Studies Faculty Hires IPLL Department Develops Hindi / Urdu Program*



Sai Bhatawadekar teaching Hindi

Six University of Hawai'i at Mānoa departments hired faculty with South Asian Studies areas of specialization in 2008-2009. The departments include Art & Art History, English, Geography, Indo-Pacific Languages & Literatures (IPLL), Religion, and Urban & Regional Planning. The hires reflect the university's continued commitment to the South Asia region and acknowledgment throughout the university of South Asian Studies' interdisciplinary significance.

These scholars will contribute to the vitality of South Asian Studies at UHM for years to come. Sai

continued on page 2

### *Sonia Nishat Amin Named 2009 Andrews Chair*

The School of Pacific and Asian Studies has selected Dr. Sonia Nishat Amin, Professor in the Department of History at University of Dhaka, as its next Arthur Lynn Andrews Chair. She will visit the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in Fall 2009.

Dr. Amin's research focuses on the development of middle-class Muslim women's identities in the late 19th century and early 20th century.

While at UH-Mānoa, Dr. Amin will teach an undergraduate class in the Department of History and deliver at least two public lectures.



Sonia Nishat Amin

## *Letter From Director*

(continued from page 1)

indeed higher education in the US in general, we here at UHM hope to continue to consolidate and grow South Asian Studies.

Profiles of our new faculty colleagues can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. Also included is a profile of Dr. Sonia Amin, Professor, Department of History, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Dr. Amin joins us for the Fall 2009 semester as the Andrews Chair of the School of Pacific and Asian Studies. We are especially pleased about her expertise on the history of social movements amongst Muslim women, for this is likely to tie in nicely with a number of different UHM initiatives.

Our annual symposium this year will be between April 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 2009. The theme is “Anticipation / Memory / Place: Sustainability, Environmentalism, and Eco-Criticism in South Asian Contexts.” Invited speakers are Kavita Phillip of University of California (Irvine), Haripriya Rangan of Monash University (Australia) and Nirmal Selvamony of Madras Christian College (Chennai, India). Additionally, there will be related panels, a film screening, cultural performances (including in Hindi and Tamil) and a guided tour of UHM’s renowned facility, the Lyon Arboretum. Given this exciting program, I am confident the symposium will, as usual, generate stimulating conversations and advance scholarly discussion on this vital topic of relevance not just to South Asia but the world at large.

Our web project “Caste in South Asia: A Gateway to Internet Resources” is now online. The website is meant primarily as a resource for teachers and scholars wishing to acquaint themselves with basic information on the topic and can be accessed at <[http://www.hawaii.edu/csas/caste\\_index.html](http://www.hawaii.edu/csas/caste_index.html)>. It is an archive of excerpts from primary and secondary sources as well as a site from which to access a variety of other websites providing relevant data and perspectives. We hope our website will prove of interest to scholars and teachers at UHM and elsewhere.

Other activities—our colloquia series, our collaborations with community organizations, the achievements of our faculty—are recorded throughout the newsletter. Especially noteworthy are the Watumull Scholarships that send students to India for study. These are important opportunities for young scholars to acquire appropriate background and skills and we are grateful indeed for the continued support that makes them possible. We invite you to go through the newsletter to acquaint yourself of our doings during the past year. To keep up with our activities on a more continual basis, we invite you to visit our website: <[www.hawaii.edu/csas](http://www.hawaii.edu/csas)>.

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## *Six New South Asian Studies Faculty Hires*

Bhatawadekar (IPLL), Reece Jones (Geography), and Uzma Aslam Khan (English) each presented papers or readings as part of the CSAS’ 2008-2009 Colloquium Series. Kristin Bloomer (Religion) has organized a visit by scholar Kalpana Ram to the UH campus under the auspices of the CSAS Rama Watumull Collaborative Lecture Series. Dr. Ram will deliver a public lecture on April 15. Profiles of each new faculty member are included in the Faculty and Student Updates section of this newsletter (pp. 4-7).

IPLL’s investment in a new Hindi/Urdu language program deserves particular mention. The return of two modern South Asian languages to the UHM curriculum will benefit students and scholars in all departments. Sai Bhatawadakar, who developed a similar program at The Ohio State University, is in charge of development. The accelerated first-year Hindi class she now teaches is overenrolled, although it was publicized on short-notice before her spring arrival.

# Congratulations!

## CSAS Welcomes 2008/9 UH-Mānoa South Asian Studies Faculty Hires



**Sai Bhatawadekar**  
UHM Department of Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures



**Kristin Bloomer**  
UHM Department of Religion



**Priyam Das**  
Department of Urban and Regional Planning



**Reece Jones**  
Department of Geography



**Uzma Aslam Khan**  
Department of English



**Paul Lavy**  
Department of Art and Art History



## Faculty and Student News

### Ned Bertz

#### (Department of History)

In 2008, Ned Bertz published a chapter entitled “Indian Ocean World Travellers: Moving Models in Multi-Sited Fieldwork” in a collection edited by Helene Basu, *Journeys and Dwellings: Indian Ocean Themes in South Asia*. He spent the summer in India and Africa conducting research for his book manuscript, “Race and Nationalism in the Indian Ocean World: Urban Space and the Indian Diaspora of Tanzania, 1920-2000,” and also presented to a faculty seminar series at the University of Mumbai, giving a lecture titled “Africa and its ‘Outsiders’: Nationalism, Race, and the Problem of the Indian Diaspora in African History.” In December, Ned attended the Sixth International Conference on Asian Studies hosted by Beijing Foreign Studies University in Hainan, China, and gave a paper on the challenges and opportunities presented by the rise of world history to area studies programs like South Asian and African Studies. In January ’09, he delivered a lecture in conjunction with the Honolulu Academy of Art’s special exhibition of Mughal paintings, titled “Between the Sword and the Crescent: Imperial Cosmopolitanism in Art of the Mughal Empire.” He’ll be off to Bombay again in February for a conference on South-South Cooperation, and then to London in June to give an invited lecture at a SOAS-hosted meeting on Indian Cinema Circuits. Ned happily received a grant to work this coming summer back in the Indian Ocean world, splitting time between the Gujarat State Archives and special newspaper collections held at the University of Dar es Salaam. While finishing research for his book manuscript, he hopes to begin collecting materials for his next major project, a transnational history of the Partition of India. Back home in the Pacific world, this past year Ned enjoyed teaching both halves of his South Asian history survey course and offering a new class on the history of the Indian Ocean world. This semester he is leading a graduate seminar in modern South Asian history featuring the themes of colonialism, nation, territory, and transnationalism, and is also supervising two undergraduate honors theses focusing on contemporary migration in Nepal and 19th-century Indian history.

### Sai Bhatawadekar

#### (Department of Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures)

Sai Bhatawadekar finished her Ph.D. in 2007 at the Ohio State University from the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures. In her research on Hegel’s and Schopenhauer’s interpretation of Hindu religion and philosophy she brings together German and South Asian Studies, Philosophy and Religious Studies, and Cross-cultural and Comparative Studies. Her other research interests include film adaptations of literature, South Asian cinema, and language pedagogy. During and after her Ph.D. she designed, taught, and established a very successful Hindi Language and South Asian Studies Program at the Ohio State University, which has consequently brought her here at University of Hawaii as Assistant Professor of Hindi/Urdu in the Department of Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures. She is currently working on examining the transition from Hinduism to Buddhism in 19th century German philosophy as well as on a Hindi text- and workbook.

### Kristin Bloomer

#### (Department of Religion)

After completing a dissertation at The University of Chicago titled “Making Mary: Hinduism, Roman Catholicism, and Spirit Possession in Tamil Nadu, South India” (2008) Kristin Bloomer joined the Department of Religion. She published “Hindu-Christian Studies: Ethnography as Method” in the *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies* (Vol. 21, 2008) and presented twice at the November 2008 American Academy of Religion Conference in Chicago, IL, including one paper titled, “Two Cases of Marian Spirit Possession: Syncretic-Somatic Semantics” in the History of Christianity Section, and another titled, “O Mother: Complicating Indian Christian Identities” with the Anthropology of Religion Group and Society for Hindu-Christian Studies. She presented a paper titled “Embodied Local Theologies: Marian and other Spirit Possessions in South India” at The University of Chicago’s “Culturing Theologies / Theologizing Cultures” conference in April 2009. Kristin taught two South Asia related courses this year, including “Women and Religion” and “Spirit Possession.” Her research plans include a book on Marian spirit possession among Hindus and Christians in south India.

### Priyam Das

#### (Department of Urban and Regional Planning)

Priyam Das joined the Department of Urban and Regional Planning this year and studies urban development, basic environmental services and governance in South Asia, and the design and planning of the built environment. She

has worked as an architect/landscape architect in India and in the United States, and has taught courses at the Boston Architectural Center and at UCLA. She is team-teaching a class at UH on Urban and Regional Planning in Asia in Spring 2009, and will teach upper-division undergraduate and graduate courses next semester related to Planning and Urban Form, respectively. Priyam's current research focuses on the provision of household water supply to low-income urban areas in Madhya Pradesh, India. Her dissertation, which is titled "Collective action around service delivery: Providing water to the urban poor in India" analyzes three community managed water supply projects in slum settlements in Gwalior, Indore, and Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, India. It provides insight into how, in a context of decentralized planning and governance, collective action creates incentives/disincentives based on complex state-community collaboration that can influence the provision and expansion of water supply services to the urban poor.

#### **Reece Jones**

##### **(Department of Geography)**

Reece Jones joined the Department of Geography in August 2008 after completing his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. His research is on the political geography of globalization with an emphasis on political borders and social boundaries in South Asia. He has publications in the journals *South Asia Research*, *Area*, and *National Identities* that analyze communal identity categories and the notion of homelands in Bangladesh and West Bengal. His recent research investigates India's fencing and security project on its border with Bangladesh. His work explores both the political decision to fence the previously open border and the consequences the securitization of the borderlands has on the lives of the local population on both sides. In November 2008, Reece presented a paper entitled "Everyday life without a state: The border enclaves of India and Bangladesh" with the UHM CSAS Fall 2008 Colloquium Series.

#### **Uzma Aslam Khan**

##### **(Department of English)**

Uzma Aslam Khan's new novel, *The Geometry of God*, is slated for release in the United States in Fall 2009. The publisher is Interlink Books, in their new imprint Clockroot Books. She is a contributor to the first anthology of English-language Pakistan women writers, entitled *And the World*



*Changed*, and published by The Feminist Press at the City University of New York (November, 2008).

#### **Paul Lavy**

##### **(Department of Art and Art History)**

Paul Lavy joined the Department of Art and Art History as an Assistant Professor of South and Southeast Asian art history in Fall 2008. He received his B.A. in cultural anthropology from Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in South and Southeast Asian art history from the University of California, Los Angeles. He subsequently taught ancient art history at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, and Asian and Islamic art history at Pennsylvania State University, University Park.

Paul has conducted research in India and throughout Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, where he worked as an independent lecturer and researcher prior to coming to Hawaii. In 2007 he received a postdoctoral research fellowship from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, for a project on early Khmer sculpture. His ongoing research, which has also been funded by the Asian Cultural Council and the National Security Education Program, investigates the links between art/architecture and politics in early historic Cambodia, Vietnam, and Thailand. His primary interests are the Hindu-Buddhist artistic traditions associated with Mekong Delta and Preangkorian civilizations and their relationships with the art of South Asia (ca. 5th – 9th cent. CE). Paul teaches a variety of courses on the art and architecture of South/Southeast Asia, including "Art and Architecture of Pre-Colonial South Asia" and "Hindu Visual Culture."

#### **Matthew S. Lopresti**

##### **(Department of Philosophy)**

Matthew S. LoPresti received the Ph.D. in Philosophy in December, 2008 from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He is now Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Humanities at Hawaii Pacific University in Honolulu, Hawaii. He was awarded an NEH Faculty Development Grant through HPU for travel to India in January 2009 to present at the 7th International Whitehead Conference in Bangalore, India. Matthew organized and chaired a panel on A. N. Whitehead, Religious Pluralism, and the South Asian Tradition at the conference and is currently editing a compilation of essays entitled, *Indian, African, and Process Philosophy on Religion*,

*Pluralism, and Reality*. His dissertation, which he is converting into a manuscript for publication is entitled, *Religious Pluralism in Analytic, Process, and South Asian Philosophies of Religion: An Essay Towards a Comparative Metaphysics of Religion*.

### **Gregory Maskarinec**

**(John A. Burns School of Medicine, Department of Family Planning and Community Health)**

Gregory Maskarinec published *Nepalese Shaman Oral Texts II (Bhujī Valley)* with Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series) in 2008. Documenting one of the world's oldest medico-religious traditions, this volume is a 1400 page bilingual collection of shaman oral texts from the Bhujī Valley of Western Nepal, in the original Nepali and with line-by-line English translation. It includes, thanks to the kind permission of the late John T. Hitchcock, 8,000 lines of material recorded in 1962 and 1967 by Professor Hitchcock, and 12,000 lines of material collected by Dr. Maskarinec in 2000 and 2001 from two later generations of shamans of the same lineages. Consequently, this collection represents three generations of shamans spanning forty years. It extends to its geographical and geographical limits the previous collection of Nepalese shaman oral texts published by Dr. Maskarinec in 1998. The book is supplemented by a multi-media DVD of additional texts, photos, videos, and audio recordings of Western Nepalese shamans and their cultural context. Extending beyond therapeutic and linguistic concerns, these texts contribute to a better understanding of social issues in contemporary Himalayan societies. In the fall semester 2008, Dr. Maskarinec was once again a visiting professor at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Paris.

### **Lee Siegel**

**(Department of Religion)**

Lee Siegel's translation, *Gitagovinda: Love Songs of Radha and Kṛṣṇa*, has been published in the Clay Sanskrit Library series by New York University Press. The University of Chicago Press also published his novel *Love and the Incredibly Old Man* in April 2008. For a symposium sponsored by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique on "La virtuosité" at the Musée Branly in Paris, Lee did a lecture-demonstration on "La virtuosité vraie et fausse des magiciens indiens." He has an issue on "The Jews of Tahiti" in the next issue of *Hana Hou* magazine, and another piece, "Pupus of

the Gods: On Hawaiian Cuisine in America During the Cold War," in the recent Hawaii Council for the Humanities book on Hawaiian culinary traditions.

### **Mimi Sharma**

**(Department of Asian Studies)**

Thanks to a fruitful sabbatical during 2008 and affiliation with the Anthropology Department at the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London), she was able to become a "born again" academic. Among numerous seminar and conference activities, she presented a paper at the European Association of South Asian Studies meeting held at Manchester University for a panel on "Censorship, Subjectivity and Subversion: cultural regulation in India from the colonial era to the present." A longer and revised version will come out in the next issue South Asia Research (journal of the School of Oriental and African Studies). A second article, "Sowing the Seeds of Diversity: Food Sovereignty and Globalization in India," co-authored with Elizabeth (Cedar) Louis of the UH Geography Department—now researching this topic in India—is under consideration for publication. Research carried out in the India Office Records at the British Library has also yielded material for her future projects on film censorship in the 1930s and Bollywood and Bhagat Singh.

### **Nandita Sharma**

**(Department of Ethnic Studies)**

Nandita Sharma served as a guest editor, with Bridget Anderson and Cynthia Wright, of the forthcoming October 2009 edition of *Refuge*, titled "No Borders: A Practical Response to State Controls on People's Migration." She published a chapter titled "Citizenship and the Disciplining of (Im)migrant Workers in the United States" in *Refugees, Recent Migrants and Employment: Challenging Borders and Exploring Pathways*, edited by Sonia McKay (London: Routledge, 2008), and authored two refereed book chapters with Cynthia Wright: "Organizing the Motley Crew and Challenging the Security of National States" in *Activist Scholarship: Social Movements and Emancipatory Knowledge* edited by Julia Sudbury and Margo Okazawa-Rey (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2008), and "'Race', Class and Gender and the Making of 'Difference': The Social Organization of 'Migrant Workers' in Canada" in *Labouring Canada: Class,*



*Race, and Gender in Canadian Working-Class History*, edited by Bryan D. Palmer and Joan Sangster (Don Mills Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2008). She and Gaye Chan co-authored two articles accepted for publication in refereed journals. *Social Justice* will publish their essay titled "Good Grief! Transforming Imaginations of Change" in a special issue called "Melancholic States." *Art on the Line: International Arts Journal* will publish their essay titled "Common Futures." In June 2008, Nandita and Gaye published a piece titled "Eating in Public" in the literary journal, *intheconversation*, and have participated together since 2002 in a web project, *Historic Hawai'i* by Downwind Productions, a collaborative of artists, writers, teachers and activists examining the impact of colonialism, capitalism and tourism in Hawai'i. Nandita has two further chapters forthcoming in refereed anthologies: "Strategic Anti-Essentialism: Decolonizing Decolonization," in *Sylvia Winter, Ten Essays and an Interview*, edited by Katherine McKittrick and Rinaldo Walcott (Durham, NC: Duke University Press), and "Canadian Nationalism in the era of Multiculturalism" in *Unsettling Multiculturalism: Lands, Labours, Bodies* (Toronto: Between the Lines Publishers, 2009). She received a Major Initiatives in the Liberal Arts Award from UHM's Vice-Chancellor of Research and Graduate Education and a Rama Watumull Collaborative Lecture Series Award from the Center for South Asian Studies to bring distinguished scholars to the UH campus.

### **Sonja Sironen**

#### **(Department of Theater and Dance)**

Sonja Sironen successfully defended her MA thesis titled, "You See the Dance, but there is the Dancer, too" - Physicality in Contemporary Aranjatram Performances in South India," in October 2008. She is planning to do a PhD. In the meantime, she is teaching a Bharata Natyam class at UHM (with funding provided by the CSAS) and teaching dance classes in the community.

### **S. Shankar**

#### **(Department of English)**

S. Shankar won the College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature Excellence in Teaching Award for 2007-2008. His essay "Postcolonialism and the Problem of Translation" was published in the anthology *New Bearings in English Studies: A Festschrift for C. T. Indra*, ed. R. Azhagarasan et al, in India. He was interviewed for the forthcoming anthology *Other Tongues: Reconsidering the Language*

*Debates in India* (Rodopi, ed. Nalini Iyer and Bonnie Zare), which includes his essay "The Tamil Krishna Devotional 'Alaipayuthey' and World Literature." Two other essays--"Teaching the African Novel in a 'Twentieth Century Novel in English' Course" (anthology from MLA Publications) and "Necessity and Desire: Water and Coca Cola in India" (Indiana UP, anthology ed. Laura Lyons and Purnima Bose)--have been accepted for publication. The Spanish translation of his novel *No End to the Journey*, will appear soon from Belacqua Ediciones y Publicaciones S. L. (Barcelona). Two journalistic articles on Obama--"Triumph of American Democracy" and "Post-racial America?"-- have appeared in the Indian newspaper *The Hindu*. He was invited to give a plenary address entitled "Necessity and Desire: Water and Coca Cola in India" at the Third International Conference of OSLE-India, Hyderabad, January 2008. In addition, he gave the following invited lectures: two on translation and Bollywood films at American University-Cairo, on Bollywood film and on caste and postcolonial theory at the East-West Center in Honolulu, on translation and postcolonialism at Cornell University, and on caste at a workshop on India organized by the Asian Studies Development Program of the East-West Center. He made shorter presentations at the Forum on Contemporary Theory 2007 Annual Convention, at the 2008 International Auto/Biography Association Biennial Conference, and at the international symposium on Folktales and Fairy Tales held at UH-Manoa. Additionally, he participated in a roundtable discussion with Ngugi wa Thiong'o and other scholars in April 2008 and gave a reading from his fiction in Ithaca, New York.



# The Center for South Asian Studies at the University of Hawai‘i

## 26th Annual Spring Symposium



### “Anticipation / Memory / Place: Sustainability, Environmentalism, and Eco-Criticism in South Asian Contexts”

April 8 - April 9, 2009  
Center for Korean Studies Auditorium

#### Invited Lectures:

✦ **Kavita Philip** will deliver a talk titled **“Technology & Tribe: Thinking Nature After Modernity”** on **Wednesday, April 8 at 9:15am**. She is an Associate Professor in Women’s Studies at UC-Irvine. Her research interests include technology in the developing world; transnational histories of science and technology; gender, race, globalization and postcolonialism; environmental history; and new media theory.

⌘ **Haripriya Rangan** will deliver a talk titled **“Ecocultural Exchanges Around the Indian Ocean: A Post-Nationalist Research Agenda”** on **Wednesday, April 8 at 1:45pm**. She is a political ecologist and environmental historian of the Indian Ocean world based in the Geography & Environmental Science department at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. Her research interests address regional sustainability and resilience from the perspectives of economic geography, development, and political ecology.

✦ **Nirmal Selvamony** will deliver a talk titled **“Beyond Environmentalism and Ecocriticism: The Classical Tamil Concept of Tinai and the Critique of Modernity”** on **Thursday, April 9, at 9:00am**. He is an eco-criticist with the Department of English at Madras Christian College, University of Madras, in Chennai, India.



### Documentary Film:

⌘ **Screening of *Stolen Water*** (Prashant and Daya, 2003), a **documentary about the Coca-Cola issue at Plachimada**; dubbed in English with English subtitles. Introduction by **Mimi Sharma**. Discussants: **Laura Lyons and S. Shankar**. **Wednesday, April 8, at 3:15pm.**

### Evening Reception:

⌘ **Pupus, Conversation, and Entertainment**. Featuring a presentation by students in Sai Bhatawadekar's accelerated 1st year Hindi language class. Sponsored by the **Graduate Student Organization**. **Wednesday, April 8, at 6:30pm.**

### Cultural Event:

⌘ ***Singing Land: A Lecture Demonstration, with Musical Accompaniment, on the Ecological Implications of Ancient Indian (Tamil) Poetry and Music***. By **Nirmal Selvamony**. Introduction by **Leela Kumaran**. **Wednesday, April 8, at 7:30pm.**

### Concluding Roundtable Discussion:

⌘ **Environmentalism in Comparative Contexts**. With **Aya Kimura, Kieko Matteson, and D. Kapua Sprout** from UH-Mānoa, and invited speakers, **Kavita Philip, Haripriya Rangan, and Nirmal Selvamony**. Sponsored by the **Comparativism and Translation in Literary / Cultural Studies Research Cluster**. **Thursday, April 9, at 11:30am**

### Panel Discussions:

✦ **Narrating Identities in Changing Environments** (3/8; 10:45am)

✦ **Politics and Policies of Environmental Change** (3/9; 10:30am)



Made possible through the generous support of the  
**G.J. & Ellen Watumull Foundation**

## THE J. WATUMULL SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE STUDY OF INDIA

The J. Watumull Scholarship for the Study of India aims to promote understanding of India through scholarship support of University of Hawai'i students who present a focused and well-developed proposal to study for a minimum of two months in India. The scholarship is generously supported by the J. Watumull Fund.

The scholarship supports University of Hawai'i students in areas of study such as the visual and performing arts, history, philosophy, religion, and politics, as well as any other field including the professional schools and community college programs. These students are expected to be enrolled in courses at a recognized Indian institution or to be conducting some pre-approved independent study overseen by a faculty member at UH in cooperation with a scholar in India. Students may also choose to participate in an approved study abroad program sponsored by another U.S. institution.

Complete information about the J. Watumull Scholarship for the Study of India is available on the CSAS website: [www.hawaii.edu/csas](http://www.hawaii.edu/csas). Applications are typically due in the early Spring of the award's calendar year.

### *J. Watumull Report by Rohan Kalyan*

I would like to take this opportunity to express thanks to the J. Watumull Scholarship Foundation for giving me the opportunity to conduct dissertation research in India during the winter 2008-2009 in Delhi. My dissertation research is trying to address the new urbanism that is reshaping city life all across India. Using Delhi as a case-study, I am exploring new practices of architecture, land-use, modes of transportation, provision of urban infrastructure, and the re-settlement of slum communities in order to map out how Delhi's recent "urban renewal" is productive of new social and political experiences that differ across a distribution of positions and sensibilities. My basic premise is that space and movement are two ways in which to think the re-shaping of urban subjectivities in neoliberal India, such that the most important distinctions in contemporary Indian society have to do with those who have or do not have access to certain spaces, and those who are differently mobile across urban space and up the social hierarchy.

In my time in Delhi, I have been affiliated with the Center for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), a research center that houses scholars of many different backgrounds, from all over India and the world. Located in the serene Civil Lines neighborhood of north Delhi, CSDS is also home to Sarai, an urban studies/new media collective that hosts resident artists, academics, and activists concerned with questions pertaining to the urban. In early February, Sarai played host to renowned political philosopher Jacques Ranciere, whose early work "Nights of Labor" had recently been translated by CSDS researcher Abey Dubey into Hindi for the first time. Ranciere gave a lecture and a workshop on his work on politics and aesthetics, and graciously responded to queries and comments regarding his work. I had the opportunity to sit with him and tell him about my own project and how it is, in part, influenced by his theoretical interventions. The whole experience was as inspiring as it was informative.

I would like to thank Sarai and the many intellectuals at CSDS for providing stimulating conversations, insights, and anecdotes that made me feel like a part of a dynamic intellectual community in Delhi. In particular, I'd like to thank Ravi Sundaram, co-founder of Sarai, for helping me adjust to my new surroundings and giving me valuable contacts in the field of urban design and architecture. With these contacts I was able to begin my research and branch out into new and often times unexpected directions with my research.

Most of all, I'd like to thank the Watumull Foundation and the Center of South Asian Studies for making all this possible. Due to this trip to Delhi, I have forged life-long friendships with academics, artists and activists in the Delhi area. I will always have a home in this politically complex and historically rich city.



2008 J. Watumull Scholar, Rohan Kalyan, with political theorist, Jacques Ranciere



## *J. Watumull Report by Crystal Chen*

I went to India under the support of the J. Watumull Scholarship, with the goal of shooting a documentary on the subject of Hindi cinema. I returned not only having shot a documentary, but also having shot a short film, worked on a professional film production, learned a great deal of Hindi and a little Marathi, and having made wonderful connections with many of India's future filmmakers.

My first month in India was spent participating in the India Study Abroad Center's Film and Media Studies Program. In the first week, I was able to meet and interview a number of active, working professionals in the industry, including actors, directors, editors, and producers. Each interview gave me a clearer understanding of the Hindi film industry from the Indian filmmakers' perspective as well as a better idea of how the industry worked on a practical level. Most notably, I was able to speak to Jagmohan Mundra, director of *Provoked* and *Shoot on Sight*, Sudipto Chattopadhyay, director of *Pankh*, and Hansel Mehta, director of *Woodstock Villa*. The next week was focused on observing professional film shoots. Having participated in a number of Academy for Creative Media (ACM) student productions as well as several Chinese/American co-productions, I immediately noticed the differences between Indian productions and American productions. However, it wasn't until later working briefly as an Assistant Director for a local company that I was able to understand the Indian filmmaking system more deeply. On week three, we were given extensive tours of the top post-production facilities in Bombay, namely Prime Focus, Adlabs, and Pixion, all of whom were working on films whose posters were beginning to appear all over billboards in the city. The last two weeks were spent putting together a short narrative film for the program. After writing the script, I assembled an Indian cast and crew to get a feel for how my own documentary would be made. I soon discovered that it is one thing to watch an Indian film being shot, and an entirely different thing being the director of one! The experience was something akin to a crash course in cross-cultural differences, but there is no doubt that I learned a great deal from shooting that short piece. My thanks especially goes to the people at White Feather Films, who helped with pre-production and production of the short.



2008 J. Watumull Scholar, Crystal Chen, with actress Kirron Kher

With new friends in the industry, I spent my free time watching a number of new releases in the city's multiplexes, which were quite different from the films being exported to the international "Bollywood" audience. Independently, I also had the opportunity to experience a Bombay film premiere and had the honor of meeting two actors I really admired, Anupam and Kirron Kher.

Once work on my documentary began in earnest, I realized from initial interviews with Tibetans that my original subject required a time frame of about four months to shoot authentically, while I had roughly half of that time remaining. My producer, Arjun Bagga, helped me re-think and revise the documentary to take advantage of the contacts and footage I had already made and collected in Bombay. I spent the subsequent weeks scheduling interviews, finalizing my outline and shotlist, and getting more footage on Hollywood plagiarism in Bollywood. I was aided greatly in my efforts by the production company for whom I had briefly worked, Guerilla Flicks, as well as my production manager, Vishal Tyagi. The task of post-production now lies ahead.

As an aside, several interviews I had scheduled for the end of November and early December were never taped as a result of the Mumbai attacks. The entire city was turned upside down as rumors spread here and there; many people stayed inside or just stayed away from the city altogether. Not wanting to take everyone's advice to stay inside, I interviewed people on the streets around my neighborhood to get their thoughts on what was occurring. Perhaps that footage will be useful one day in the future.

I am deeply grateful for being given the opportunity to understand and document on Hindi cinema by going into the heart of the industry itself. This trip marked the beginning of many exciting future film projects and collaborations in India for me. All of this was made possible by the J. Watumull Scholarship for the Study of India.



## **J. Watumull Report by Geoff Ashton**

Thanks to the support of the J. Watumull Scholarship, I had the opportunity to conduct research in India this past summer that will be integral to the completion of my Dissertation. My proposed Dissertation aims to explore the intersection of aesthetics and ethics by examining the aesthetic theory of the 10th - 11th century Kashmir Shaivite philosopher, Abhinavagupta. Both my living situation in Varanasi, India, and the time and energy that my teachers and caretakers devoted to my well-being made for the perfect recipe to a successful experience.

Upon my arrival to the Cantonment Railway Station in Varanasi, I was immediately welcomed by a driver sent by the Jnana Pravaha Center. Jnana Pravaha is a Center for Cultural Studies and Research that regularly sponsors projects and seminars concerned with Indian culture. It houses a library stocked with books on Indian history, culture, the arts, Sanskrit literature, philosophy, and various other related subjects. The Jnana Pravaha Center also boasts a museum that has a collection of ancient coins, miniature paintings, classical musical instruments, sculptures, terracotta, and many other art and decorative collections. But Jnana Pravaha is much more than a lecture hall, library, or museum; it is a living work of art itself that breaths its power and grace into you. Located on the west bank of the River Ganges, and just a few kilometers south of the center of one of India's oldest and most entrancing cities, it has hosted some of India's most renowned artists, scholars, and even yogis. Needless to say, I was completely blown away when I arrived to the Center that first day. This amazing first impression was later sustained by the constant care shown by those who live and work at the Jnana Pravaha Center - the cook made the most delicious and strength-giving vegetarian meals I'd ever had and brought fresh glasses of mango, guava, and other fruit juices to my study table on the hour, while the Honorary Director of the Center, Professor Kamal Giri, invited me to live classical Indian music performances and arranged for me to attend other cultural events occurring in Varanasi. All in all, the Jnana Pravaha Center was the ideal site for me to immerse myself in the thinking and way of being of the great Hindu mystic, philosopher, and aesthetician, Abhinavagupta.



2008 J. Watumull Scholar, Geoff Ashton, with Prof. Kamalesh Jha at the Jnana Pravaha Center in Varanasi

(sometimes chanting) Sanskrit verses of Abhinavagupta's writings, in particular, the *Paramarthasara*, and discussing the philosophical perplexities of the ontological and epistemological frameworks underlying his aesthetic theory. Our meetings were not only informative, but inspiring. For this reason, I am especially grateful to Professor Kamalesh Jha.

In the end, I would like to express the utmost thanks to the J. Watumull Foundation for not only making possible a valuable research opportunity, but for also enabling me to deepen my understanding of Indian philosophy and culture generally through the relationships that I was able to establish this past summer at the Jnana Pravaha Center.

## *RCUH Funds Research in Nepal for Honors Student*

By Nada McClellan

Last July I lived in Kathmandu with a community of Tibetans who have migrated from Limi, a remote village in northwestern Nepal near the Tibetan border. Younger members of the community who have been raised and educated in Kathmandu recently formed an organization called the Limi Youth Club. With the help of a small non-profit organization, the Antahkarana Society, they are pursuing several development projects in their home village. I am interested in the various ways in which these youth participate in rural development, how the sense of community generated by the youth club influences their career plans, and what this says about the relationship between rural development, migration, and education.

A \$2,960 summer research award from the University Research Council made it possible for me to spend a month in Kathmandu conducting preliminary research for my senior honors thesis tentatively titled “Migrant

Communities and Youth-Led Rural Development in Limi, Nepal.” I

intend to return to Nepal this summer in order to continue my research.

For a month I was immersed in such an interesting cultural environment – living in a Tibetan community that is itself foreign to the local Nepali culture. I participated in prayers and daily kora around the Boudha stupa, celebrated the Dalai Lama’s birthday, learned to cook Tibetan food, played games with the children, tutored English, and learned a little Tibetan.



Members of the Limi Youth Group playing limbo.

While adapting to new ways of interacting with people, living, and perceiving things, I realized the limitations of some of my own ideas and values, and how fluidly these ideas and values were able to change and expand. I would like to express a sincere thank you to the University Research Council for providing me with this opportunity and my faculty advisor Dr. Ned Bertz for his excellent guidance and support.

*Nada McClellan is a Senior honors student at UH-Manoa majoring in Asian Studies with a focus on South Asia*



Nada McClellan and friend at the Phullahari Monastery overlooking Kathmandu Valley

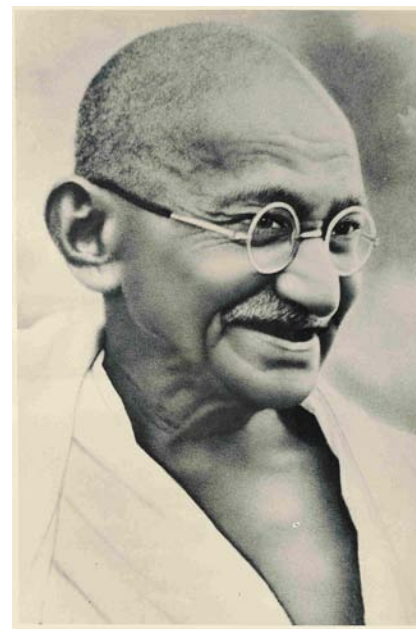


The Antahkarana Society funds English and Tibetan literacy classes for women.



## ***Library Digitization Project to Feature Rare Gandhi Photos*** By Monica Ghosh

Approximately 25 photographic images of Mohandas K. Gandhi, created by and for the Press Information Bureau (PIB) of the Government of India, are now being digitized for inclusion in the University of Hawaii at Manoa's Library Digitalization Project. The images, capturing moments in his life from 1886-1948, are of Gandhi with other historic figures, such as Lord Mountbatten, parliamentarian Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sundar Vallabhai Patel, Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, and Lord Cripps (responsible for the partition of India); and family members, such as his brother Laxmidas, sister, and wife. The locations of the images are diverse, including Gandhi's birthplace in Porbander, in South Africa, Rajkot, Simla, Srinagar, Delhi, in the ashram at Sevagram, and at the scene of his cremation in Allahabad in 1948.



Mariko Kershaw, graduate student in UH-Manoa's Library and Information Sciences Program.

Mariko Kershaw, a graduate student in the Library and Information Science Program, is digitizing the photos as part of her internship in the Asia Collection this semester. Monica Ghosh, South Asia Librarian at Hamilton Library, is supervising the project.

The Gandhi Photos digitization project should be complete by the end of Spring semester. At that time, they will be made available through the Library's Digital Collections website at <http://library.manoa.hawaii.edu/research/digicoll.html>. The photographs will also be preserved as original artifacts.

## ***"Got Bollywood?" Or Looking for Something Else?***

By Mimi Sharma

The University of Hawai'i's Indian feature film holdings in the Wong AudioVisual Center at Sinclair Library have greatly increased due to the efforts of Video Librarian Linda Engleberg and Mimi Sharma, Professor of Asian Studies. The two have been working for several years to create this collection and positive support from Ned Shultz, Interim Dean of the School of Pacific and Asian Studies has made it a reality. Now numbering nearly 200 feature films in Indian languages—mostly Hindi, but also Bengali, Panjabi, Tamil, and Urdu—there are not only more recent Bollywood favorites, but many of the old time classic films dating back to the 50s as well. The collection contains films by South Asian directors in the Diaspora as well as a host of other items (e.g., television serials).

You can generate a list for yourself. Go to the Sinclair Library webpage: <http://www.sinclair.hawaii.edu/wavc/>; then click on "Feature Film and Video Resources" and search by language (for a fuller listing), director, or title.

This semester, for the first time, Professor Sharma is teaching a course on Indian film and she hopes that this will generate even more interest in the future. It's not only fun, but also a great way for students in the Hindi class to facilitate their language learning.



## Center for South Asian Studies 2008/2009 Colloquium Series

**24th September: Sadhana Naithani** (Jawaharlal Nehru University Centre of German Studies)

*Folktales - Value of Changing Forms from Colonialism to Bollywood Cinema*

UHM International Symposium, *Folktales and Fairy Tales: Translation, Colonialism, and Cinema*. Sponsored by the Department of English. Co-sponsored by the Center for South Asian Studies, the Center for Pacific Islands Studies, and the Indigenous Politics Program of the Department of Political Science.

**12th October: Uzma Aslam Khan** (UHM Department of English)

*Trespassing - a reading and discussion*

Sponsored by Revolution Books. Co-sponsored by the Center for South Asian Studies.

**6th November: Reece Jones** (UHM Department of Geography)

*Everyday life without a state: The border enclaves of India and Bangladesh*

**13th November: S. Krishna** (UHM Department of Political Science)

*Imaging the International in Postcolonial Fiction: forays into Ghosh, Desai, and Roy*

Sponsored by the Department of English. Co-sponsored by the Center for South Asian Studies

**11th February: S. Shankar** (UHM Department of English and the Center for South Asian Studies)

*Caste and the Difference It Makes: New Directions in Postcolonial Theory*

Sponsored by the UHM/EWC International Cultural Studies Program. Co-sponsored by the Center for South Asian Studies.

**26th February: Sai Bhatawadekar** (UHM Department of Indo-Pacific Languages & Literatures)

*Symptoms of Withdrawal: The Threefold Conceptual Structure of Hegel's & Schopenhauer's Interpretation of Hindu Religion and Philosophy*

Sponsored by the Department of Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures. Co-sponsored by the Center for South Asian Studies.

**26th February: Aslam Syed** (Endowed Arthur Lynn Andrews Chair, UHM School of Pacific and Asian Studies)

*Arthur Lynn Andrews Chair Public Lecture - Parrots into Nightingales: Persian Contributions to South Asian Languages and Literatures*

Sponsored by the UHM Department of Asian Studies. Co-sponsored by the Center for South Asian Studies.

**19th March: Kamala Visweswaran** (University of Texas at Austin Department of Anthropology)

*A Thousand Genocides Now: Gujarat in the Modern Imaginary of Violence*

Part of the Rama Watumull Collaborative Lecture Series. Co-sponsored by UHM's Department of Anthropology, Center for South Asian Studies, Department of Ethnic Studies, and the International Cultural Studies Program.

**8th - 9th April:**

**26th Annual CSAS Spring Symposium**

**Environmentalism, Sustainability, and Eco-Criticism in South Asian Contexts**

**see <http://www.hawaii.edu/csas> for program details**

**15th April: Kalpana Ram** (Macquarie University Department of Anthropology)

*A Morality More Fundamental than Formal Religious Boundaries? Shared Practices of Seeking Justice in Popular Christianity and Hinduism, Rural South India*

Part of the Rama Watumull Collaborative Lecture Series. Co-Sponsored by the UHM Department of Religion and the Center for South Asian Studies.

**12th April: John Taber** (University of New Mexico, Department of Philosophy)

*The Mīmāṃsā Theory of the Eternality of Language*

Part of the Rama Watumull Collaborative Lecture Series. Co-sponsored by the UHM Department of Philosophy and the Center for South Asian Studies.



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### *About Our Organization...*

Strategically located, and with a multicultural heritage, the state of Hawai'i has always been uniquely international in outlook. The people, traditions, and cultural milieu of this island state in the Pacific provide a strong and continuing bond with Asia.

Beginning with the establishment of the Oriental Institute in 1935 and a still ongoing series of East-West Philosophers' Conferences in 1939. This emphasis continued with the establishment of the journal "Philosophy East and West" in 1951 and the Asian Studies Program.

The Center for South Asian Studies was created in 1985. Since then the objective of the Center has been to coordinate and integrate, by juxtaposing humanistic with scientific scholarship, and historical and contemporary data. The Center thus serves to illuminate specific questions of regional interest, and complements and bridges the disciplinary departments directly related to it.

The Center guides and assists study of both past and present societies and cultures of South Asia and promotes faculty interaction across departmental lines to foster comparative and interdisciplinary research on the region. South Asia includes contemporary Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India (including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands), Lakshadweep, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Tibet.

26th Annual Spring Symposium

### **Memory / Anticipation / Place: Environmentalism, Sustainability, and Eco-Criticism in South Asia Contexts**

April 8-9, 2009 in Honolulu, Hawai'i

### Center For South Asian Studies

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